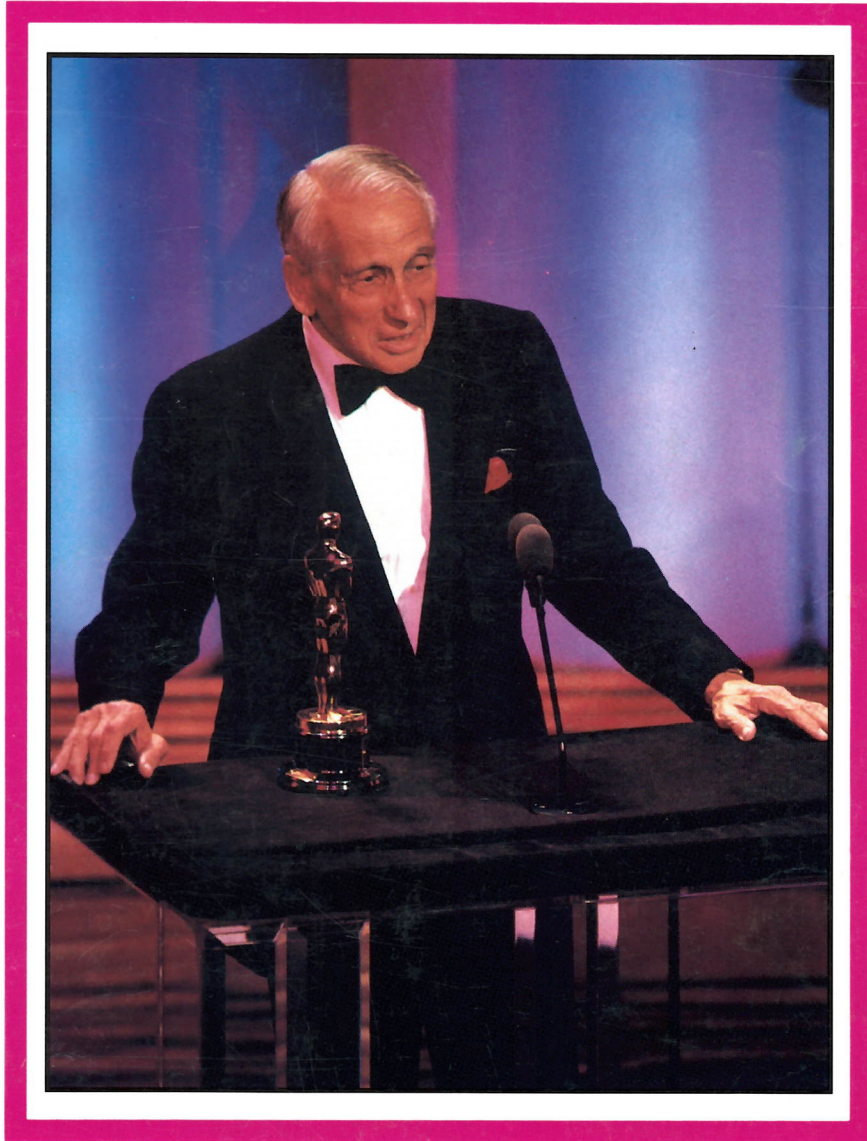

THE PEDDIE SCHOOL

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Howard W. Koch '33

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Making Waves: A world class swim team

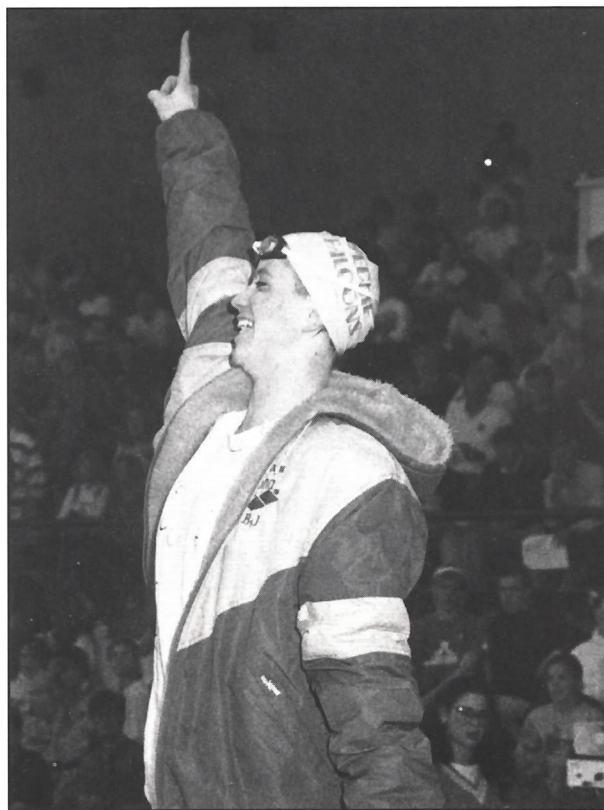
The 1990 Peddie swim team should be remembered and honored not for its formidable reputation, nor for its world-class accomplishments, but for its place at Peddie as a developer of human potential and character. While other schools produce swimmers like machines, Peddie's star athletes are also well-rounded students. Through the prowess of Coach Martin, these swimmers work to achieve high goals which can be reached only through sacrifice and determination and result in a young person with amazing capacities for success, stamina and goal-setting in all facets of life.

Their unity went beyond standard teamwork and became a family within the greater Peddie family. Students devoted incredible amounts of time to practice and travel. In addition to their physical and emotional dedication to the team, the swimmers took on the financial costs of success and paid for their travel around the country and uniforms themselves. Students grew unbelievably close to Coach Martin and each other under the auspices of an equally dedicated group of parents.

High School Competitive Swimming

Very proud of the job well done, Coach Martin expects both the boy's and girl's teams to be named National High School Champions—making it the second

year in a row for the girls. Both teams won the Easterns with runaway point totals. For the third consecutive year, girls won their 24th straight dual meet and the boys won their 30th.



Undoubtedly the best swim team in the history of Peddie, they nonetheless follow a tradition which was instilled by the teams of 1977 and 1982.

National Level Swimming

Peddie swimmers competed in the U.S. Open Senior Championships in

Nashville. The team of eighteen included Mark Sedlak '90, Amy Walker '92, Jodi Navta '93, Barbara Bedford '90, Richard Dzavik '91, Nelson Diebel '90, Ariel Rad '90, Jane Skillman '91, Andrew

Rutherford '90, Jim Wells '92, Jeb Slowik '90, Maria Koziol '91, Amy Bosseler '90, Royce Sharp '91, Julie Veremy '90, Laura Koerckel '91, Wayne Snellgrove '91, Darryl Baker '90. Peddie is the only team in the Top 10 that is high school-based — and the only team without a fifty meter pool. As Coach Martin explains, "They were up against swim programs that are either based in large universities or are huge financial institutions set up just for the sport of swimming."

Distinguishing themselves, the team brought back a silver plate for second place which was given to their coach instead of displaying it at Peddie. Coach Martin says, "It is the most valuable thing that I have ever had. I will keep it and cherish it for the rest of my life. I want it not because it is second place, but because of how it was won." The team that barely beat them at nationals, the Texas Longhorns, included several Olympic athletes who were winning meets before our

Peddie athletes were in kindergarten. Coach Martin describes the team which finished third, Mission Viejo, as "quite literally an entire town set up for a swim team. School is from 10:00 until 2:00 without lunch so that practices can be held at the optimal times."

Clearly, Peddie athletes must be commended for their superhuman effort as they remained regular Peddie students

meeting rigorous academic standards. Coach Martin knows that "these 18 kids could have gone anywhere and had an easier life. Instead, they and their parents chose to pursue excellence in the context of Peddie and all that Peddie stands for. They chose the dorm life, the dorm food, nightly study hall, the hard teachers, the tough grading standards."

World Class Swimming

There are four swimmers who are world ranked in the Top 15. That means that in a given calendar year, only 14 people on earth can beat them. Coach Martin bemoans the fact that swimmers don't get as much national attention as other athletes. Though Peddie athletes aren't as well-paid as competitive tennis players, he believes the level of excellence Nelson Diebel displays is comparable to Boris Becker, Jane Skillman to Monica Seles, Royce Sharp to Stefan Edberg, and Barbara Jane Bedford to Gabriela Sabatini.

Coach Martin is hard-pressed to find words to describe their incredible unified effort and accomplishments and realizes that "in this day and age the word sacrifice isn't as popular as it used to be years ago. But to these kids, sacrifice is a word that they face each and every day: on weekends, vacations, and in the summer." Coach Martin focuses on the concept of sacrifice, and in his estimation, Peddie swimmers give up non-essentials for one greater goal and find their reward.

(The above is from an address given by Swimming Coach Chris Martin to the students during Community Meeting.)

Skillman Learns from Janet Evans

The stage lights on Jane Skillman's

brief time at U.S. nationals last August began to dim. Having raced her fourth and final event, she warmed down, letting the excess energy drain from her 16 year old body. The dream of making the U.S. national team, of joining the women's national team on the journey to Tokyo and the Pan-Pacific Championships, faded. All that remained was to pack and fly away to Princeton, her home.

"I thought, 'Oh well, you had a good season,' recalled Skillman, now a Peddie School junior. "Then the team manager pulled me over and she said, 'We're taking you to Tokyo. You're one of the alternates on the relay.'" Skillman did not worry about packing anymore. With only two hours to get ready for the team flight from Los Angeles to the Guam training site, she simply started to panic. The dream, which would take her to a second place finish in the 400 meter freestyle behind three time Olympic gold medalist Janet Evans, was just beginning.

Life whirled for a while after that wondrous August in Japan. Considering that the U.S. Olympic team takes the top two swimmers in each event and that she has a second-place finish to a gold medalist on her resume, Skillman knows the '92 Olympics are within her grasp. But Skillman, a studious young woman who enjoys living at home and being "different" from her schoolmates, looks at the Olympics as a dot on the horizon. "It's definitely something I set out to try and do," she said. "You can never commit to making the Olympics. One day I'll be



(left) Victory is sweet after swimming a million practice laps. (above) There is Peddie pride in the eyes of this team.

trying to make trials and focus everything on it. But it's a lot of years away and it's not worth it now."

If she is meant for such heights, the week of training in Guam and the week that followed in Tokyo will have served as a beginners' course in faring with fame. "I trained with Janet Evans," she said. "We did the most yardage. It was weird at first, but I got used to it really quick. We were the last two out of the pool. Janet would get out and there would be five TV interviews for her. I'd go to the locker room and get changed."

While America doesn't recognize her name yet, other swimmers do. Skillman knows what she must do to maintain her edge. "Chris says I was the hunter at first; now I'm the hunted," Skillman said. "People slower than me are trying to get me. It can be scary, but I